



Social Events - These tips are not all inclusive. You may have additional questions related to your specific group event.

Basic Planning Tips

- Determine date(s) and time(s) of the special event, and if possible a set of alternative date(s) and time(s).
- Decide on the destination city.
- Will guest rooms be needed? If so how many?
- Will event space be needed?
- Will food & beverage be needed?
- Will audio/visual equipment be needed?
- Determine the daily schedule.
- Determine the total budget spend for the event(s). Break down the budget to allow for:
 - Guest rooms
 - Meeting space
 - Food & beverage
 - Audio / visual equipment rental

Finding a Hotel

- Contact the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau for meeting/hotel facility information. The Chicago Southland CVB will be glad to assist with bids and facility selection.

Guest Rooms

- How many guest rooms will be required on each night of the event?
- What is the breakdown number of singles, doubles, and suites? Inquire about the different room types offered by the hotel.
- Are these counts estimates or exact?
- How many people will occupy each room?
- What is the budgeted guest room rate?

- Are connecting rooms required or would you prefer to have rooms with no connecting doors?
- Do all or any of the rooms need to be on the same floor or near each other?
- Determine how reservations for the group will be made. Will each attendee be responsible for making their own reservations or will reservations be handled by one person?
- Ask the hotel to create a free customized personalized online group page for the event. Give the URL to team members allowing them to book their reservations quickly and easily.
- OR use the group code, supplied by the hotel.
- Ask the hotel when names for all of the guest rooms are due by.
- After check-in, ask the hotel sales manager for a copy of the room list complete with guest names and room numbers. This will allow you to know where everyone is in case of an emergency.

Event Space

- Use the meeting arranger (available thru the Chicago Southland CVB) to determine the appropriate meeting room size needed for the meeting.
- Is the meeting room separated from adjoining rooms? Are there solid walls, sliding panel or air walls? View the hotel's meeting space floor plan images, where applicable.
- Determine the full duration of the event.
- If the event is scheduled over several days, are the start and end times different on each day?
- Determine the number of people attending.
- What kind of seating arrangement is needed? (Reception, Theatre, U shape, Classroom, Conference, Banquet and Hollow Square)
- Prepare two lists for the seating plan one in alphabetical order and one in order by table number.
- Determine what type of Audio/Visual equipment is required for entertainment and speakers.
- Will a podium be needed?
- Is a stage required?
- Will a dance floor be needed?
- Will extra tables be needed for gift bags, prizes, etc?

Food and Beverage

- Determine the number of people to be served at each event.
- Will everyone be served at one time or are multiple seatings needed?
- Determine menu and beverage choices.

- Is a separate hospitality room needed?
- What is the hotel's outside food and beverage policy? What are the liability insurance needs?
- Advise the hotel of any special dietary requirements for people attending the event.
- Determine the food and beverage service charges.

Billing and Payment

- Who is responsible for the payment of guest rooms and the event space?
- How will incidentals (phone calls, room service, etc.) be handled?
- How will final payment be made? Credit card, check, etc?
- Who will be authorized to make changes for the group that would involve extra charges from the hotel?
- Is an advanced deposit required? If so, is there a payment schedule?
- Would you like to set up a master bill with the hotel? If so, what charges will be added and who is authorized to make those charges?

Additional Basic Tips

- Check the available parking at the hotel. Is there a cost?
- Is transportation available to and from airport? Is there a schedule or will you need to make reservations? Is there a charge?
- Let property know of accessibility special needs for guests' rooms, public areas or function rooms.
- Ensure hotel is fully aware of the delivery and collection times planned by all outside vendors.
- Check out things to do in the area before or after the event.

Notes
